46TH INTERNATIONAL GLASS INVITATIONAL AWARD WINNERS

July 14, 2018-September 23, 2018

Organized by Habatat Galleries, this exhibition is the oldest and largest annual contemporary glass show in the country. Selected from an array of glass masters, this exhibition features the best studio glass artists in the world. In its 46th year, the invitational presents contemporary glass sculpture in the greater context of international influence with unconventional forms and processes.

How to use this resource: This packet is designed to be flexible. Use it to help prepare for a docent-led tour of the museum, to inform a self-guided tour, or to discuss selected artworks in your classroom, whether you’re able to physically visit the museum or not. The suggested activities (page 7) should be used in conjunction with in-depth discussion of at least one related artwork.

What is an invitational?

An invitational is a competition that is open to only those who are invited. For art, that means that a number of artists are invited to submit a number of their works, 2-4 pieces in this case, for consideration by a panel of judges. Habatat Gallery, a fine art gallery based in Royal Oak, Michigan, invites artists that are both known and unknown to them. Around 75% are well established glass artists, some who are represented by Habatat and some who are not, while 25% are newer artists or artists using glass in a new or innovative way. The invited artists send their pieces to Habatat’s galleries so that the jurors can see them in person for judging. For this invitational, there are three judges: Charles Shepard, FWMoA’s President and CEO; an academic who studies, teaches, or practices glass-making; and a couple that collects glass. The jury changes every year except for Charles! 24 winners are selected, so each judge chooses eight artists, who then send one or two pieces to FWMoA for exhibition. Sometimes chosen artworks get bought by collectors, so not every piece you see in the exhibition may have been the exact piece that was juried. The pieces in the exhibition are also up for sale, a unique aspect of this exhibition.

Who are the artists?

The invited artists include men, women, solo artists, and teams from the USA to Sweden to Japan!

Hank Murta Adams (USA)  
Shelley M. Allen (USA)  
Michael Behrens (Germany)  
Christina Bothwell (USA)  
Robert Bender (USA)  
Latchezar Boyadjiev (USA)  
Alex Bernstein (USA)  
Peter Bremers (The Netherlands)  
Javier Gomez (Spain)  
Tomas Hlavicka (Czech Republic)  
Petr Hora (Czech Republic)  
Toshio Iezumi (Japan)  
Joseph Ivacic (USA)  
Laura Beth Konopinski (USA)  
Steve Linn (France)  
Stephen Powell (USA)  
Colin Reid (UK)  
Martin Rosol (USA)  
Ivana Sramkova (Czech Republic)  
Tim Tate (USA)  
Winnie Teschmacher (The Netherlands)  
Ann Wolff (Sweden)  
Brent Kee Young (USA)  
John and Kate Littleton Vogel (USA)
EXHIBITION RESOURCE PACKET

MEDIUM AND TECHNIQUE

Glass art takes many forms, from cast glass to cut glass, and each artist uses a specific process to achieve their end result. Glassblowing is the oldest industry in the US, but wasn’t commonly used to create fine art sculptures until the Studio Glass movement of the 1960s. Most glass is soda-lime glass, made mostly of silica (like sand), soda (sodium carbonate), and lime (calcium carbonate). Other additives can color the glass or give it different properties. Soda-lime glass transitions (softens) at just over 1,000° F and becomes a liquid at 1,900° F. Cut glass, on the other hand, uses lead crystal—the added lead makes the glass more clear, refractive, and heavy, while also softening it so it can be carved without cracking. Some other glass you may be familiar with, like Borosilicate glass, is more heat-resistant and is frequently used in labs and cooking (as Pyrex). It is also sometimes used in lamp work. The color in glass comes from different minerals and metals: shades of red come from small amounts of gold, blue from cobalt or copper, yellow from sulfur. Below we have highlighted a few of the glass processes you will see in the exhibition.

Blown Glass

A team sport, blown glass requires at least two people and a lot of action! Blown glass is achieved by gathering hot glass (composed mostly of sand heated to over 2,000 degrees!) onto the end of a blow pipe (which must be kept spinning constantly, or gravity causes the molten glass to fall off). The glass is rolled onto a metal table to be smoothed out and is further shaped by wooden molds soaked in water. Why do you think you would soak the molds in water? A bubble is blown through the pipe (see photo) into the glass gather and then is shaped using a mold or wooden tongs.

How do you think artists learn these techniques?

If you were part of a glassblowing team, what part of the process would you want to be responsible for?

Cast Glass

Unlike blown glass that creates light glass, cast glass produces heavy, solid glass sculptures. Artists like Peter Bremers sculpt a full-size model of their work from a material, often wax or clay, and then cast it in plaster to create a mold. Once the mold is dry the model is removed and the final glass version is cast by kiln casting or the hot pour method. The hot pour method is when hot molten glass is poured into a mold. The glass is then left to cool slowly in the kiln, depending on the desired thickness it may be left for weeks! After casting, the glass has a frosty “skin” that can then be left as is or polished for a shine!

Do you think this method requires as many people as blown glass? Which one do you think takes more time to learn?

Torchwork or Lampwork

Torchwork, lampwork, or flamework is the glasswork process where a torch or lamp is used to melt the glass. Early lamp-workers used the flame from a oil lamp, today artists use torches that burn propane or natural glass mixed with air or pure oxygen. Once in a molten state, glass is formed by blowing and shaping with tools and precise hand movements. Lampworking is used to create artwork, figurines, marbles, and even some scientific instruments! Done with many different types of glass, the most commonly used are soda-lime and lead glass, or soft glasses, because they are more malleable. Leaded glass is also used to make neon signs. See photos of the torchwork process on page 4!
A selection of these works will be discussed during a docent-led school tour. A PowerPoint presentation featuring multipole viewpoints of the artworks for classroom use may be found at fwmoa.org/PreK-12/

Themes: process, perspective, material, collaboration, translucent, transparent, opaque

Essential questions: (choose 2-3) How can a viewer “read” a work of art as text? How does collaboration expand the creative process? What criteria are considered when selecting works for presentation, a portfolio, or a collection? How is personal preference different from an evaluation? (VA: Re8.1.4a; VA: Cr1.1.6a; VA: Pr5.1.6a; VA: Re9.1.3a)

Ideas to consider and look for throughout the exhibit

- **Flags**: Even though we are an American Art museum, this particular exhibit includes both American and International artists. To help you know where each artist is from, a picture of their national flag appears next to their name. How many flags do you recognize? How many flags did you have to look up? (Standard VA: Cn11.1.1a)

- **Signatures**: Many of the glass artists have signed their work. Without touching the glass, move around the piece and see if you can find the artist signature! Why do artists sign their work? Why do you sign your artwork?

- **Lighting**: Notice the way the light affects the glass pieces. How important do you think lighting is in an exhibit like this? (Standard VA: Pr6.1.2a).

- Are we sure all of these pieces are glass? Yes! Glass comes in a variety of forms and has multiple functions. It does not always look like the glass we are familiar with, like our kitchen drinking glasses. Glass we use is called functional glass. The glass we have on display is fine art glass. Which pieces of fine art glass would you display in your house? (Standard VA: Cn11.1.Ka)

- **Uh oh!** Remember, glass of any kind is fragile and susceptible to breaking or smudging! When we walk through these galleries, we need to be especially careful to keep our hands behind our backs and our shoulders and feet away from walls and pedestals.

Stephen Powell, *Lurid Salacious Viper*, blown glass (left)

Stephen Powell, *Frazzled Whispy Dreamer*, blown glass (right)

Discuss the two pieces separately first. What is the first thing you notice? Size, color.

Now, compare and contrast the two pieces: both are blown glass, color, size, geometric shapes

How do you think they would look from behind?

What do you think the artist was thinking about when he created these pieces? How do the titles help us?

In his artist video (see pg. 8) Stephen talks a lot about light. Why is light so important? How do you think we incorporate that into the gallery when our technical team lights the pieces?

When you go into the Winslow Homer exhibit, notice the light there. It’s darker. Why do you think that is? Too keep the paper from fading in the light.
Brent Kee Young, *Myth in the First Order...Rising*, flame worked borosilicate glass

The first thing we notice about this piece is the height. How do you think the artist created this piece? Young creates his glass art by firing pieces of borosilicate glass and using tongs/tweezers to shape the glass (see pg. 8 for video resources).

Note the intricacy of this piece, such as the ladders inside the sculpture. How long do you think this would take? Would you have the patience to create something like this?

Do these pieces look familiar? We had a solo show by Young last year in Gallery 7!

John Littleton and Kate Vogel, *Star Catcher*, cast glass

This is a collaboration between two artists! Why do you think artists work together? Whose hands are those? They are a cast of the artists’ hands! Look at the detailing on the hands, can you see the lines on the fingers? Walk around the piece and see how it changes, what can you see from one angle and not the other? What do you think the hands are holding? If you were to make a piece like this, what would you want your hands to be holding?

Why do you think the artist decided to make the hands out of a frosted glass but the object translucent? Can we see through our actual hands?

What do you think an artist finds important about hands? Why might they choose that body part to highlight? An artist works with their hands!
Colin Reid, *Corn R1900*, cast glass

*Point-of-view:* walk around this piece, how does it change from angle to angle? When does it look 2D and when does it look 3D?

How do you think this would feel if you were allowed to touch it? Would we be able to feel the individual kernels of corn or is it all smooth?

Have you eaten corn on the cob? It’s a staple of Midwest cuisine! Have you ever thought of food as art?

How and where do you think artists get inspiration for their work?

Caterina Weintraub, *Bunny*, blown glass and lampwork

Does this bunny look like it’s made out of glass? What does it look like? Remember that glass comes in various forms, not just how we think of it as drinking ware!

What do you think the bunny is feeling? The bunny seems sort of sad, with his head down and shoulders slouching.

The artist has mixed two glass processes into one work. Why do you think an artist would do this? Each glass-making process allows you do something different with the material depending on what the artist wants the glass to look like.

Can you tell what kind of flowers these are? Notice how delicate and how much detail they have! Do you think the artist had to have patience and be extremely careful when she made this?

Winnie Teschmacher, *Focus*, optical cut and polished glass

How is this piece different from other ones we’ve seen? Move around the work and notice where the reflections show up. How is this different from a mirror?

This is smooth glass! How do you think it would feel if we could touch it?

Do you think it would be heavy or light?

What does this artwork remind you of? Spaceship!
Peter Bremers, *Hollow Space*, cast glass

If you were here last winter you may have seen Peter Bremers’ solo show. Is this similar or different to what you’ve seen before?

What does this remind you of? Read the title. How does the title relate to the artwork?

The *Eagle* and *Crocodile* are also made using cast glass. How do those pieces compare to this one? Shape, color, opacity

Winnie Teschmacher, *Touching the Void 3*, optical cut & polished glass

This piece reminds me of the hands holding the piece of glass we saw earlier. How is it similar and/or different? Two different pieces: one translucent and one more reflective.

Why do you think she made the same shape using two different glass processes? What effect does it have when they are placed together?

Ivana Sramkova, *Eagle*, cast glass

Does this look like glass? Is it all glass? What are the talons made out of?

If you didn’t know this was a glass exhibit would you guess it was made out of glass? What other materials might you guess it was made out of?

Notice the way this work is lit. What do you see? The shadow of the eagle!

Ivana Sramkova, *Crocodile*, cast glass

Does this look like a glass piece? Is it all glass?

Compare and contrast the two animals. What is similar? What is different?

Would you have picked one of these pieces for the exhibition? Why? Why not?

Peter Bremers, *Transformation VIII*, cast glass

How are the two Bremers’ pieces similar? How are they different?

What does the shape remind you of? Shark tooth, fish fin, hook

Would you want pieces like this in your house?

How do you think artists ensure their pieces stay balanced so they don’t tip over?
SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES: to be used in conjunction with a visit to the museum and/or an in-class discussion of selected artworks

Art Projects and Discussion Starters

- Inspired by artist Stephen Powell, make a stained glass window collage using tissue paper and laundry starch. Learn how here: https://www.carlemuseum.org/blogs/making-art/collaborative-window-collage

- Make your own Dale Chihuly-inspired sculpture out of recyclables. Color plastic water bottles with permanent markers and then cut them up to refit them into interesting forms! Visit the Chihuly sculptures in the museum for inspiration!

- Making glass is an extremely collaborative process. Often glass artists have multiple assistants, each with their own special role in the process, that help create the final piece. Pick a project and divide your class into groups, having them take turns as the “lead artist” and “artist aid” roles. Is it hard to explain your artistic vision to others?

- Have a mini gallery show by asking students to (carefully) bring in one glass piece from their homes with a written label (instructions for how the art museum writes labels can be find in the pre-visit PowerPoint). How many students have similar pieces of glass? Do they all use them for the same thing? Have students analyze the pieces, both in terms of function and aesthetics.

- Play with a light table! Experiment how light reflects through other objects and changes the colors. Create your own design inspired by stained glass. Use aluminum foil and permanent markers to create a stained glass artwork.

- Have fun with magnifying glasses! Use Google Arts and Culture to look closely at famous artworks. What do we notice up close that maybe gets lost when we stand far away?

Extensions

- History or Social Studies: Map the timeline of glass from functional to fine art. Note cultures (like Italy’s Murano/Venetian glass) that have become known for their glass art.

- Science: Bring in different types of plastic and have students sandpaper them. How does it affect the plastic? How does this relate to glass (frosted/opaque look)?

- Science: Have fun with magnifying glasses! Bring in different “specimens” for students to look closely. What do they notice up close that wouldn’t be apparent from far away?

- Science: Experiment with honey and other viscous liquids to imitate glass-blowing. Use this site for reference: http://teachers.egfi-k12.org/lesson-glass-blowing/

- Math: Glass art requires control of temperatures. Each process uses a heating/cooling method to work the glass. Create a project that focuses on different types of glass and their heating and cooling limits. Have students discuss how this would change when variables like thickness are added (shorter or longer periods of heating and cooling)? How does this impact the artistic process?

- English: Ask students to pick a glass process and write a short research paper on the history and use of the glass created. Include a list of artists using that process, do they all make the same thing/use it in the same way?

- English: We often discuss narrative in paintings and drawings, but sculpture can tell a story too. Select a sculpture from the exhibition like Bunny or Eagle and incorporate it into a written narrative. Students may also consider drawing inspiration for their setting from a glass sculpture such as Peter Bremers’ or Brent Kee Young’s—how would you describe these settings for your readers?
FURTHER READING AND RESOURCES

- **Stephen Powell** Dazzling Glass Sculptures HGTV Interview: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d3pZDOkQDew](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d3pZDOkQDew)

- **Brent Kee Young** Process Videos:
  - 1987 Cleveland Arts Prize for Visual Arts Interview: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qsCdTR1l_VY&t=74s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qsCdTR1l_VY&t=74s)
  - First Voice, Ohio interview: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tg4hyA_AwQY&t=3s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tg4hyA_AwQY&t=3s)

- **Peter Bremers** FWMoA process interview: [https://www.fwmoa.org/outreach](https://www.fwmoa.org/outreach)

- **The Corning Museum of Glass** has a great website of resources, here are some of our favorite things:

- **Glassigator**, a children’s book exploring the glassblowing process by glass artist Dan Dailey and his daughter, Allison MacNeil Dailey.

- Look for posts highlighting glass on FWMoA’s blog, ARTICULATE, at [fwmoa.blog](http://fwmoa.blog)